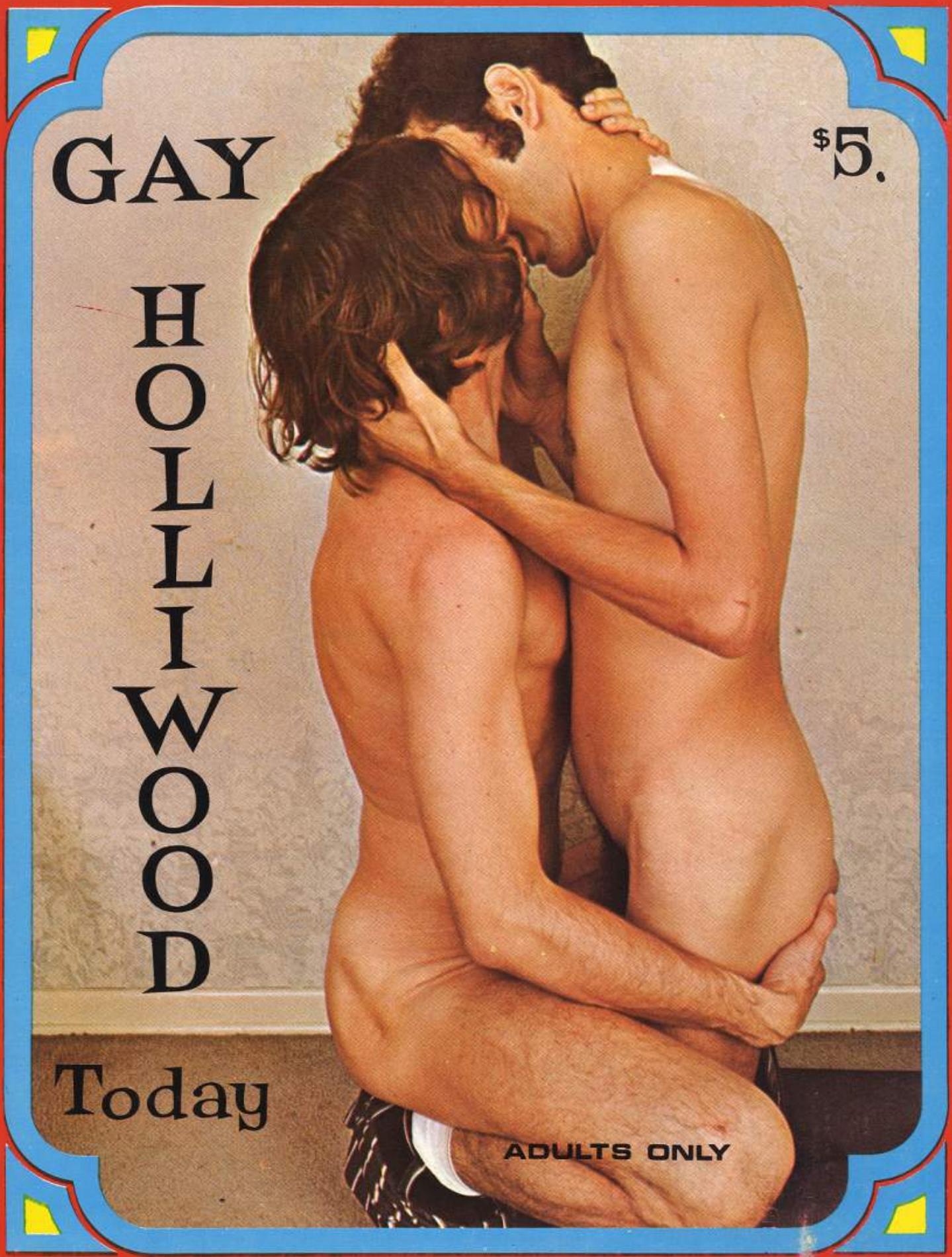
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HOLLYWOOD . . . GAY CAPITOL OF THE WORLD

FOR THE AVERAGE TOURIST to the City of the Angels, Hollywood is a relatively small area roughly defined by Franklin Avenue on the North, Santa Monica Avenue on the South, Gower on the East and La Brea on the West. Few of them ever see more than the two main east-west streets through this section, Hollywood and Sunset Boulevards.

What they see, however, is a facade of wigshops, taco stands, oriental gift stores, clothing stores and movie palaces. They are blinded by bright lights and ballyhoo, conned by preadolescent kids into buying "maps to the star's homes." They spend their two weeks on a whirlwind tour of studios and

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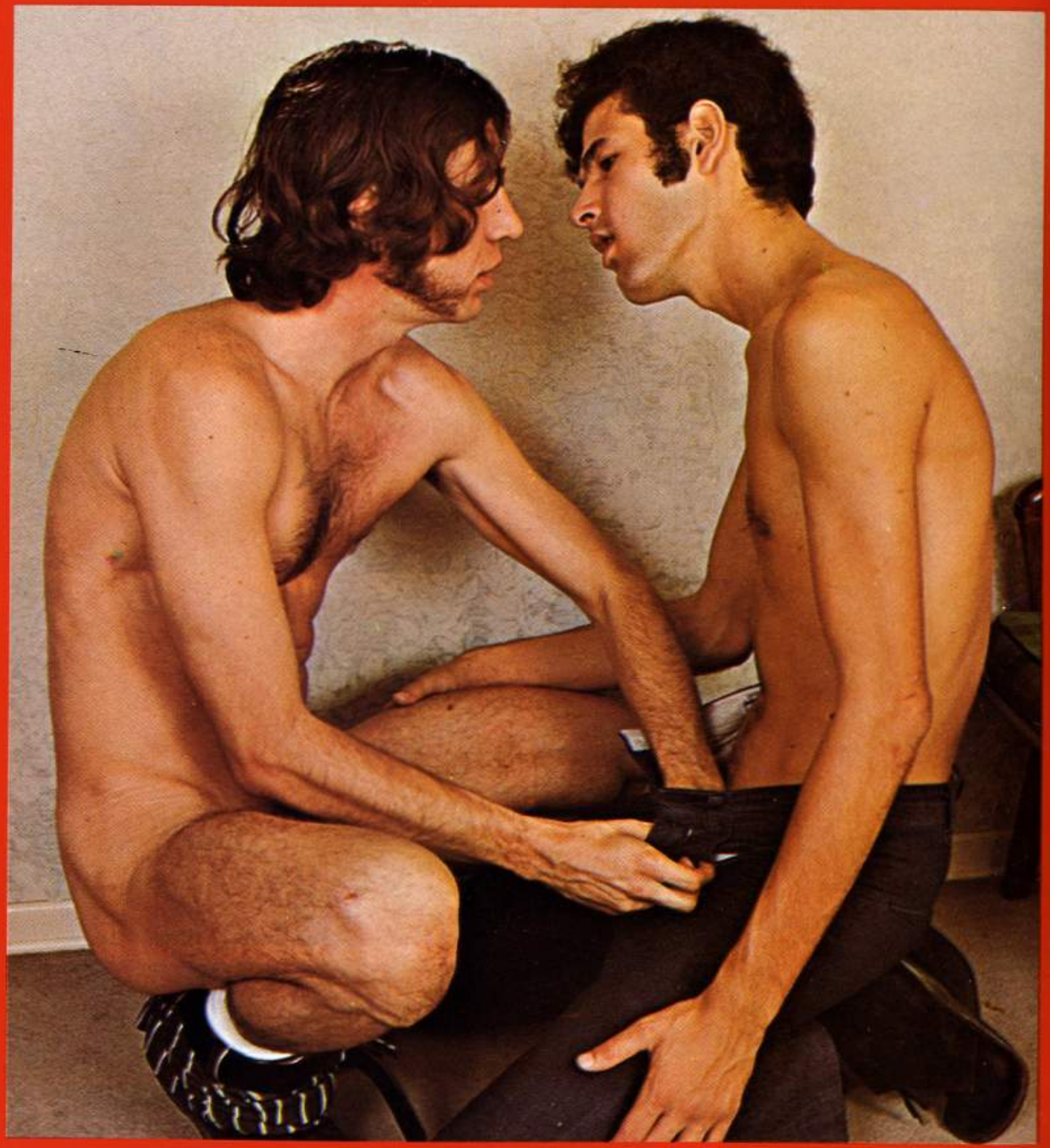
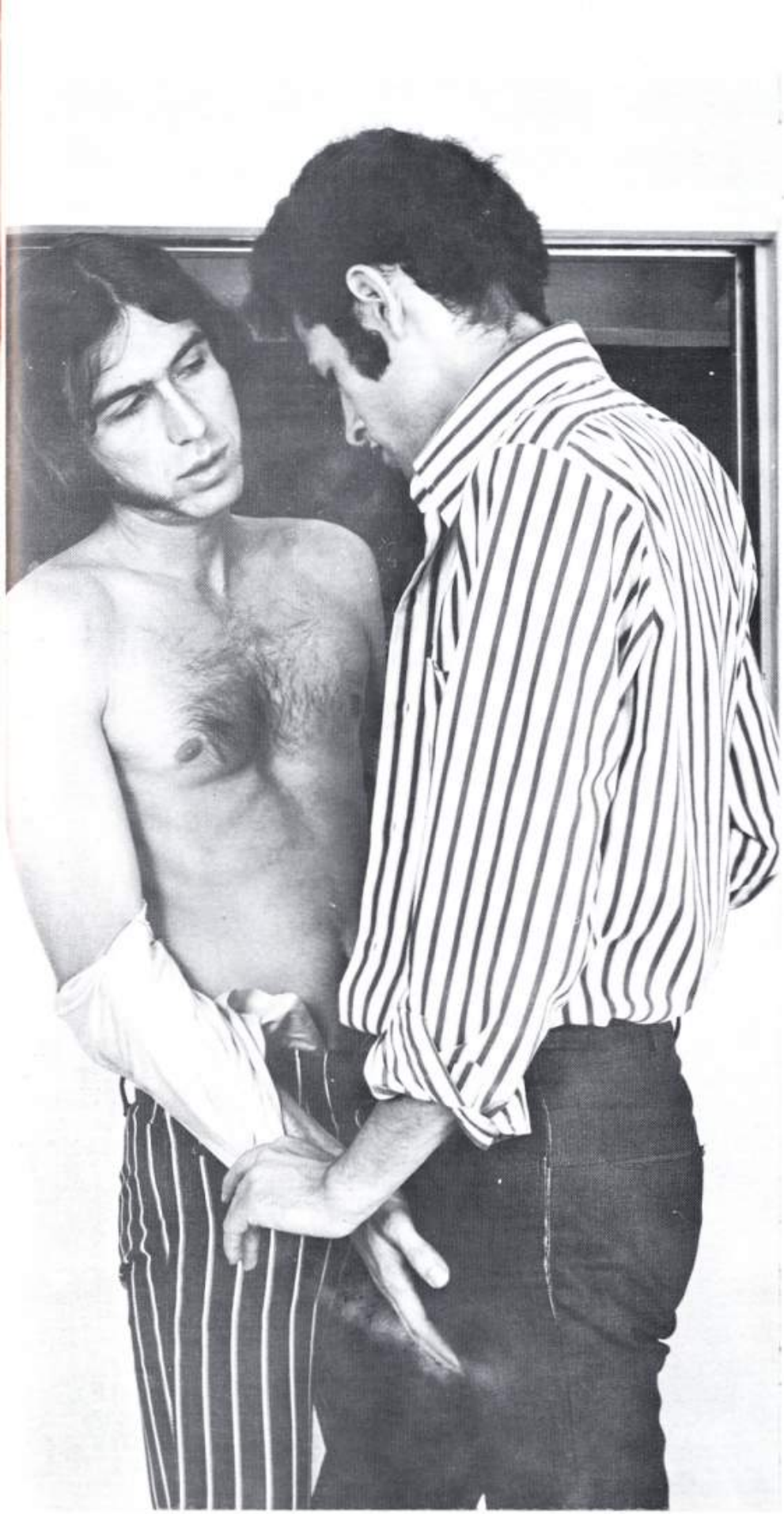




return to their homes in the Midwest either disenchanted with their first glimpse of the muchly touted corner of Hollywood and Vine or with more stars in their eyes than they saw, or could see in Hollywood.

Make no mistake. Hollywood is still in, and very much a part of, Los Angeles—but nowadays it's more of a state of mind than a specific area. Hollywood is "where the action is" and it makes little difference what the action is. There is action in the area that the tourists call Hollywood, and plenty of it. It's sometimes a little difficult to find though. And the Angelinos, mobile people that they are, tend to spread their activities over a larger area than do people from most communities; as a result, Hollywood can be said to include West Hollywood, Wilshire, Silverlake, Los Feliz, North Hollywood. It can be said to even have tenacles in Santa Monica, Long Beach and Palm Springs. It is the center of "the industry," which is local jargon for the movies. It's a center of other industries too—including the oldest profession, and it has practitioners of both sexes.

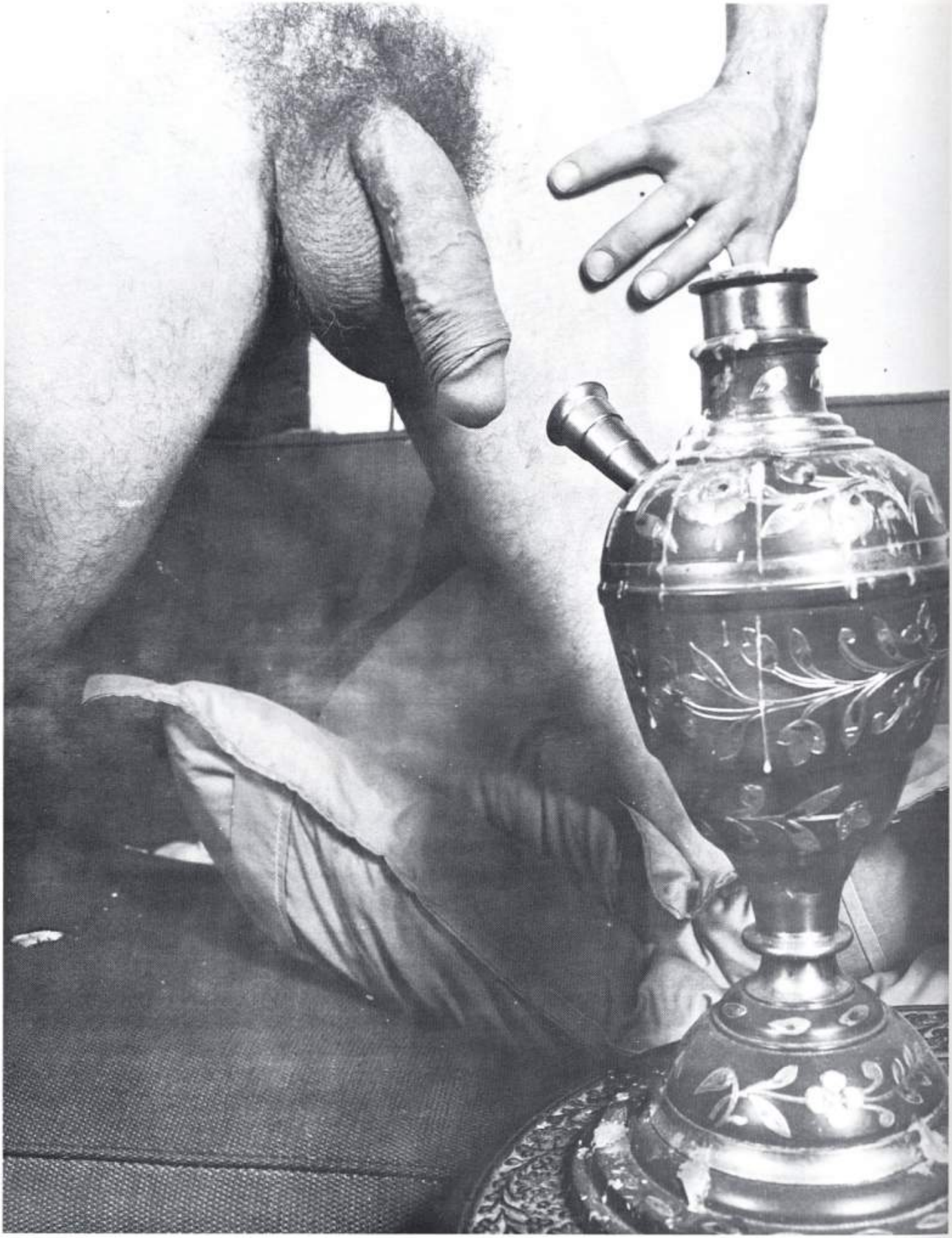
California now has ten percent of the country's population, and the majority of California's population is in the Southern region—centered around Los Angeles. It can readily be seen that Los Angeles then would have a greater population of homosexuals simply as a result of the law of averages. But Los Angeles has more than the law of averages working in this regard. The "industry" is there, the glamour is there, the excitement is there. And the "queens" are there—in force. So great is the number of homosexuals per square acre that it

would be impossible NOT to concede to Hollywood its rightful title of the Gay Capitol.

As far as Hollywood is concerned though, capitol is more than just a title. As any capitol should, it actively directs much of the course of the homophile movement in the United States. It is the home of several "gay" organizations dedicated to the advancement of homosexuals and homosexuality, many of which work quietly and diligently in the background and frequently without the support of those whom they benefit.

Several newpapers and magazines report on the local and national scenes; lending, of course, their own slant to the news. Others are more concerned with reports concerning the activities of the local fuzz and what's happening at what bar.

Magazines by the hundreds pour out of Los Angeles for the entertainment of their homosexual readers. Novels, too, mostly paper-backs, convey the story of homosexuality as it is practiced in the United States.



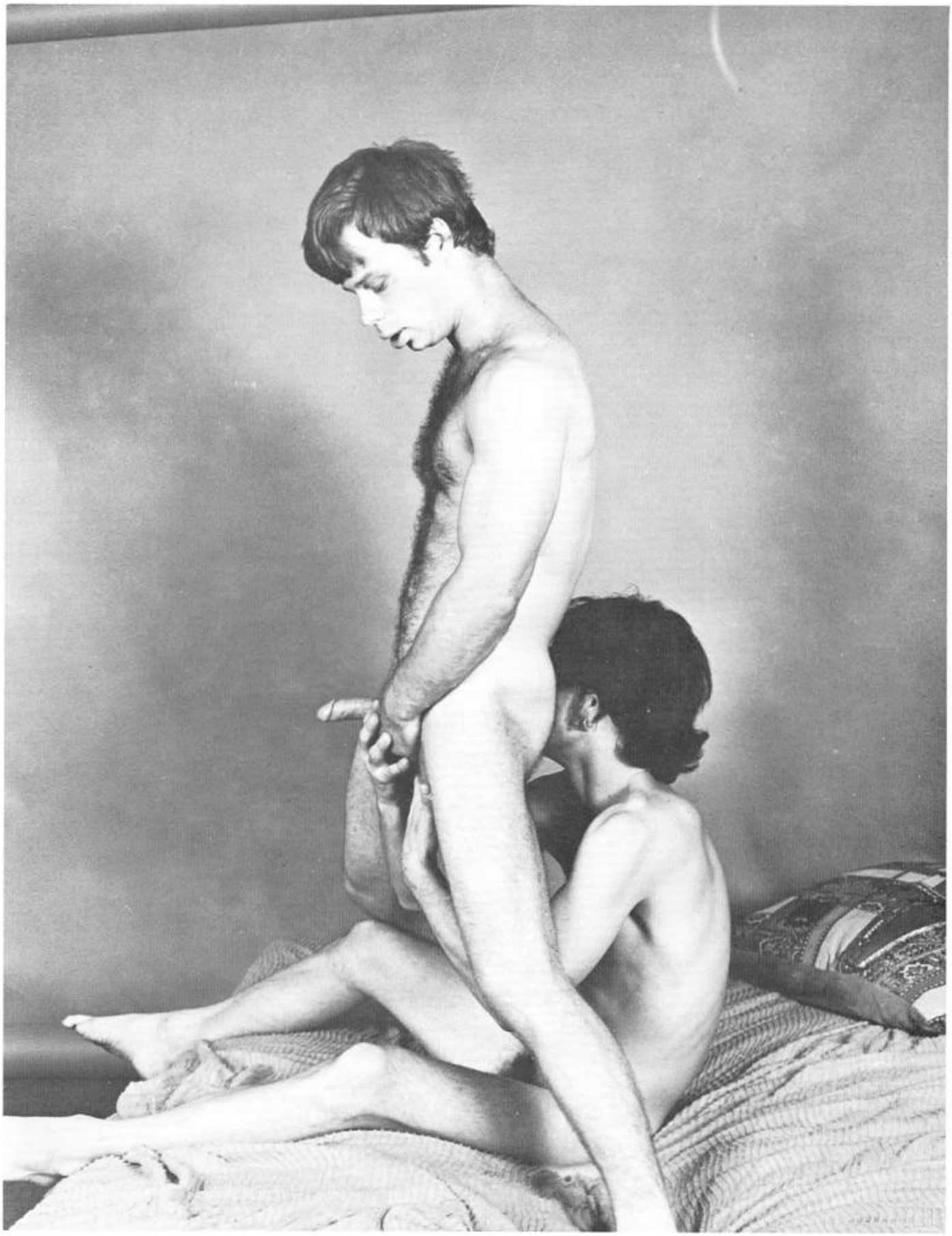
Most of these magazines are available on a subscription basis, and naturally find their way to the gay communities all over the country. The magazines and books that are not available through subscriptions, or perhaps not readily obtained in smaller communities are often distributed nationwide through a type of "reader's service."

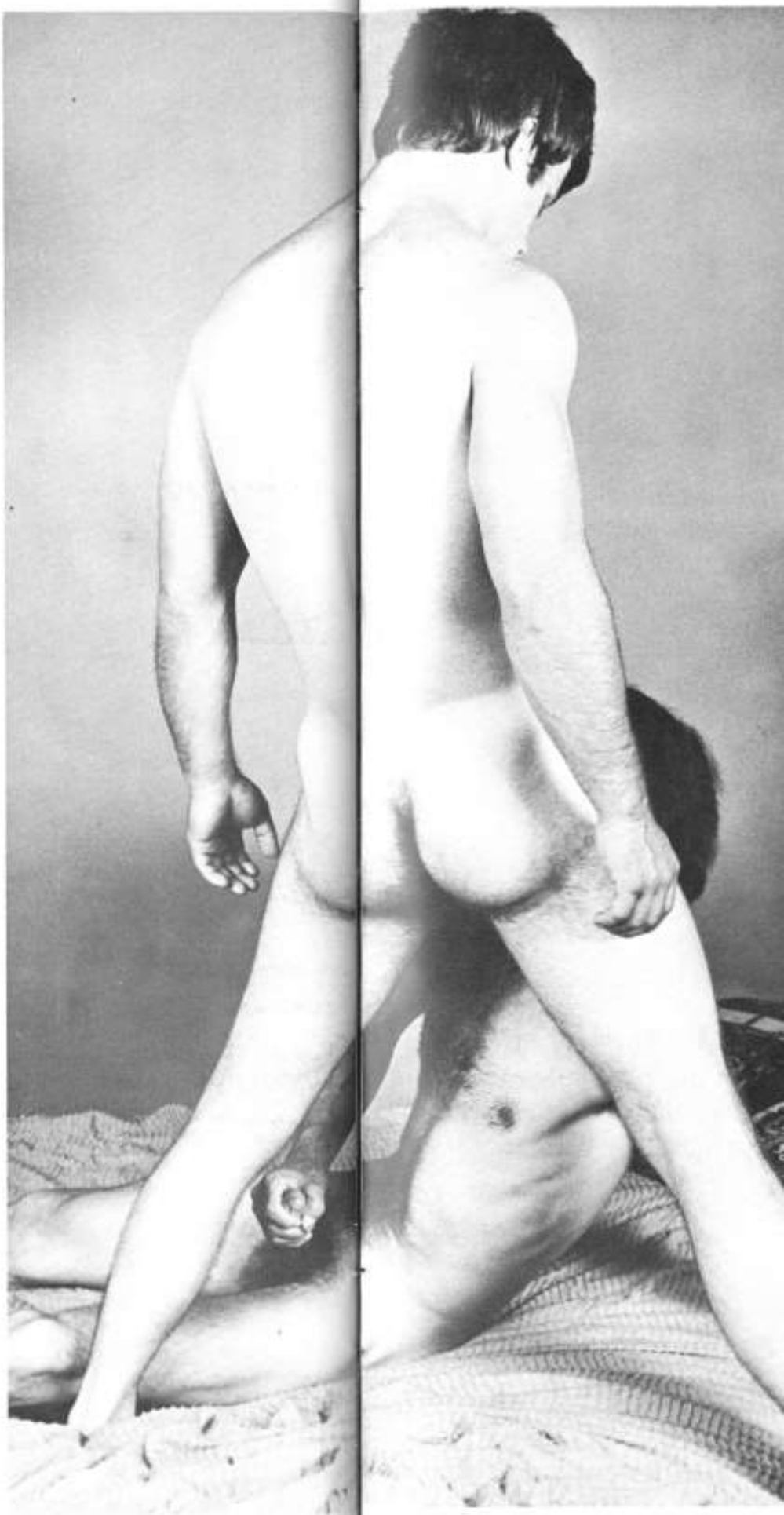
When it is realized that the majority of this literature is written by the inverts themselves, who are surrounded on every hand by the Southern California scene, one can see the impact that such patterns would have upon the style of life all over the country. On yet another count, Hollywood emerges as the gay capitol.

Naturally, where there is a demand supply will follow, and the queer community of Los Angeles is no exception. In nearly every major city there are boys for hire, by the hour or by the night, and at varying prices. Here again Hollywood has set the style—tight Levi's and tee shirts have almost become the trademark of the hustler from coast to coast.

For those whose appetites are a bit more selective, or whose position demands more discretion, there are "houses" and call-boys.

By far and large, however, the gay set of Hollywood seems to prefer to make their contacts in the bars. Many homosexuals choose to cruise only in the straight (heterosexual) bars for any number of





reasons. Most, though, prefer to frequent the gay bars, in spite of the greater possibility of police curiosity, and/or arrest.

The Hollywood style of bar is probably the most unique feature of the gay life of this town. Local ordinances, habits, and attitudes, all are contributing factors to their peculiarities. The very uniqueness of this particular aspect of the gay life of Hollywood has lured homosexuals from all parts of the country. Each, of course, has compared the bars with those of his own home town, and taken the ideas from Hollywood back with him, or written home about them to his friends. This interchange of ideas again sets new styles and trends, varying of course in compliance with the local statutes of the communities influenced. But more about this later on, and, in greater detail.

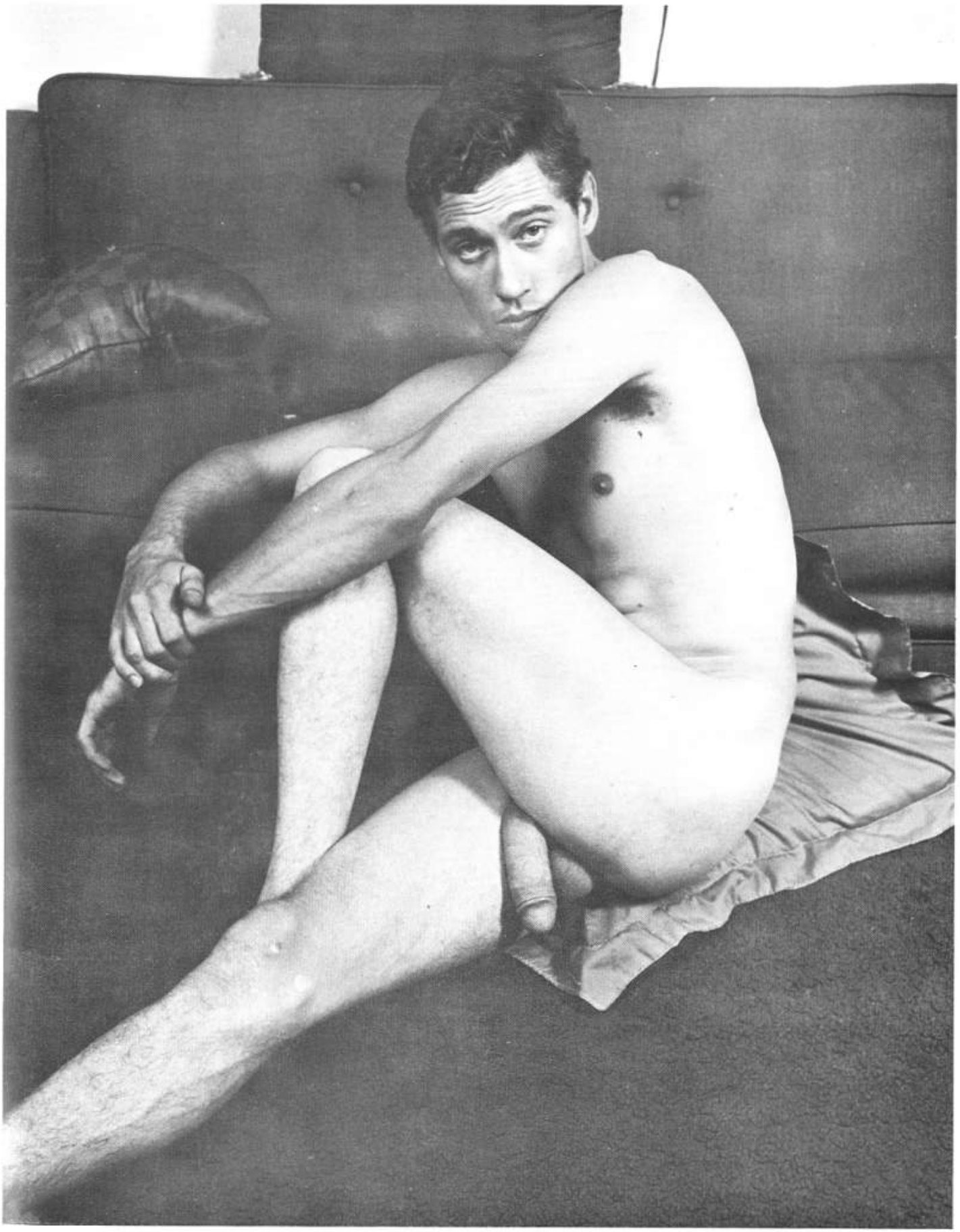
A relatively new emergence of the past few years is the private club. These have taken on many forms and shapes—most of them patterned after like institutions in the heterosexual world. The gay key clubs were among the first to spring up followed by membership-only bath houses, fraternities and clubs. The key club idea has seemed to be the one that flourishes now on a more or less national scale. Here too Hollywood has set the pace for the rest of the country—and the world—to follow.

It is almost superfluous to bring up the subject of beaches. Nowhere else in the world, with a few possible exceptions in South America, can one find the equivalent of Southern California's beaches. These, combined with the unique California weather, have tended to create a way of life, among the gays as well as the straights, and the impact can be discerned in many diverse ways. A few years ago, people tended to think of homosexuals as pasty faced weaklings hiding behind makeup and sunglasses, and hardly healthy enough to walk across a street unaided. To a great extent, California shattered that image, with its brawny, lusty, suntanned beach-Gods (or goddesses, if you will) who were quite qualified to make musclebound straights tremble, for one reason or another.

And Hollywood, of course, started the indoor-outdoor, casual type of living that has since been taken up across the land. One almost wonders what homosexuals about the country did to occupy their time before Hollywoodians suggested such things as swimming pools, hibachis, luaus, and such.

The Hollywood male, gay or straight, is a good looking, colorful renegade—and it was only natural that he lead the revolution that has occured, and is still occuring, in male fashions. From the bold new look in cuts and colors, to the male hair dressing salons, to the makeup and hairspray that guys are now buying even in Kokomo—it started here.

Homosexuals all over the country, and in other parts of the world as well, are enjoying a new social and legal freedom. There's little denying that it



started here. Long before it became "fashionable" in Chicago to have a "fag" at the party, the gays and straight were mixing it up in Hollywood—as a matter of fact, I've heard that no city in the world has more mixed up gays and straights; but that's another matter. I think. As for the legal aspect, almost everything that's being done in this country on that score, originates in and around Hollywood.

The churches and organized religions of the Hollywood area have pioneered in bringing homosexuals back into the fold.

But these are details, all of which will be covered at length in the chapters to follow. What they really all mean is that here, like nowhere else in the world, the homosexual lives in a world that welcomes him, a world not quite his own but one in which he can live and function and succeed or fail like any other human being. It's very nearly a complete world. If he wanted the gay individual in Hollywood could spend just about his entire life, perform nearly every function, entertain and provide for himself, in a purely gay milieu. Surprising? Yes, if you don't live here, if you don't know "the town", it probably is. But then, Hollywood is surprising. After all, hasn't it always been the land of dreams?

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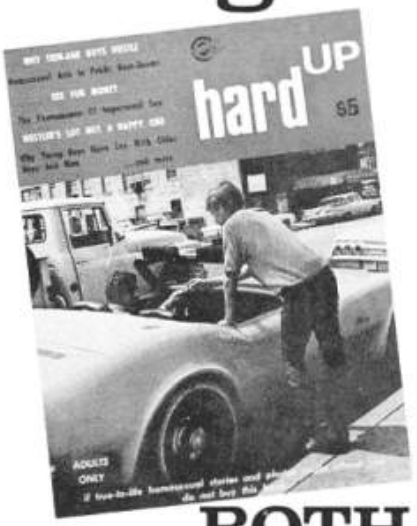

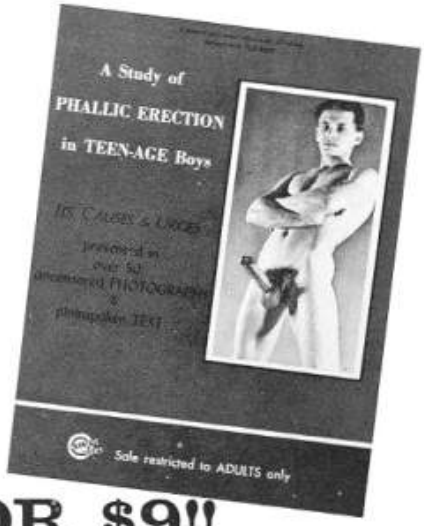

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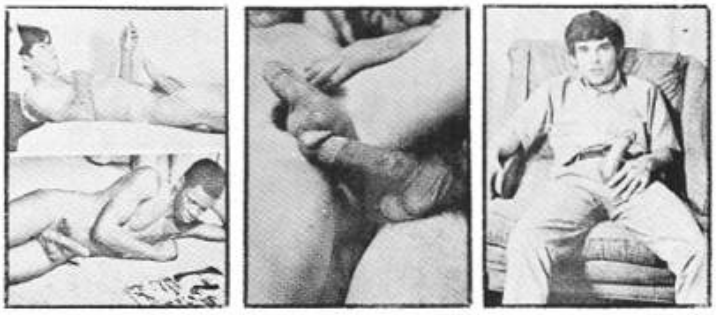

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